

CELEBRITY NEWS

The Magazine of Celebrities



Established 1911

PRESENTS



JOSE ITURBI

Pianist

Jubilee Auditorium

Calgary, Alberta

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BIOGRAPHY

Born in Valencia, Jose Iturbi was one of four children. His sister, Amparo Iturbi, is a world famous concert pianist in her own right, and his older brother, Ricardo Iturbi, was a well-known stage actor in Valencia, Spain. The Iturbi family, some three generations back, had come from the basque country and the name in Basque means "two fountains."

PRODIGY AT SEVEN

Jose Iturbi was a child prodigy. At seven the black-eyed little "Pepe" knew the growing pains of public life. He was studying, teaching pupils three and four times his age, and giving concerts before amazed, excited Spanish audiences. In Valencia, he attended the local Conservatory. Later he was sent to Barcelona to work under Joaquin Malats. The next step was Paris. The people of Valencia made up a purse to send the wonder youth to the French capital. Those were hard days for Iturbi. He studied at the Conservatory all day, played in the cafes of the Boulevards at night to earn money for his food and board. But at seventeen he was graduated with the first prize of all first honors. It was during a lean period at the beginning of his career that Jose Iturbi, under a nom de plume, was playing in the cafe of a fashionable hotel in Zurich. The telephone rang—it was a call for Jose Iturbi. The young pianist confessed his identity, answered. The director of the Conservatory of Geneva spoke. It seemed the fame of the young man had spread. It was a pleasure to offer him the position of head of the piano faculty, a post once held by Liszt. Mr. Iturbi stayed in Switzerland four years, then left to embark on the life he had chosen, the life of a virtuoso. That was the real beginning of a concert career which was to catapult him before very long into international fame.

AMERICAN DEBUT

Mr. Iturbi arrived in the United States for the first time in October, 1929, sailed again for Europe in January, 1930, and in a little more than three months had made his name a household word in musical America. Returning for his second American tour the following October, he played seventy-seven concerts from coast to coast. Since then he has come back every season and since his sensational debut has played more concerts in North America during that time than any other pianist except Paderewski.

ITURBI — the CONDUCTOR

An interesting and significant phase of Jose Iturbi's career has been his extraordinary career as a conductor. He has long contended that there is a conductor's baton up the sleeve of every musician. His chance came in the spring of 1933. He was in Mexico City, engaged for four piano recitals. He gave nineteen instead. His success was sensational, the public was in the palm of his hand, and it was then he seized the opportunity to step from the keyboard to the podium. After the first concert, the newspaper "El Universal" announced: "In music the life of our times divides itself from today into two great chapters—before and after Iturbi." Another ten performances followed culminating in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A permanent orchestra of one hundred men was organized which Mr. Iturbi directed again the next year. Returning to New York following his first Mexican season, Mr. Iturbi was invited to officiate as guest conductor of the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra for two concerts at the Lewisohn Stadium. The result was a series of engagements. Since then he has been made permanent conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic, a post he held for eight years, and has conducted all the leading orchestras of the world, including the London Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, National Orchestra of Madrid, the Lamoureux Orchestra of Paris, and the La Scala Orchestra of Milan, and many others. He is also permanent conductor of the Valencia Orchestra, from his native Valencia, Spain, which orchestra he took on tour of the British Isles and France in 1950 with an outstanding success.

ITURBI ON TELEVISION

In addition to his concert engagements both here and abroad. Mr. Iturbi performs frequently on television and is guest artist twice a year on the popular "Telephone Hour."

Jose Iturbi

Pianist

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

PROGRAM

I.

ARABESKE, OPUS 18 Robert Schumann

This work was composed in 1839, and published the same year by Spina of Vienna. It is dedicated to the wife of Major F. Serro, a great friend of Robert and Clara Schumann. The piece consists of a recurrent main section, two contrasting ones in minor (somewhat slower in pace), and a coda. The principal section is spun out of a forward pressing and light romantic melody.

II.

SONATA No. 14 IN C SHARP MINOR, OPUS 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight")

Ludwig van Beethoven

Although there is no factual basis for the many romantic stories telling how this work became known as the "Moonlight" Sonata, the name is a fitting one. Opening with the Adagio sostenuto, a sad and stately melody, the sonata fades softly into the Allegretto which is lively and happy, and then into the Intermezzo, a delicate melody. The Trio reintroduces a mood of somber sadness, and in the Finale, Presto agitato, there is a passionate surge of sound closing with a magnificent coda. This sonata is dedicated to the Countess Giulietta Guicciardi with whom Beethoven had fallen in love in 1802.

III.

BALLADE No. 3 IN A FLAT, OPUS 47 Frederic Chopin

Written in Paris, in 1841, this is the most high-spirited and light-hearted of the four ballades. An unusually beautiful melody and syncopation in triple rhythm characterize this work.

FANTASY IMPROMPTU IN C SHARP MINOR, OPUS 66 .. Frederic Chopin

Among the posthumous works of Chopin was found this Fantasy on which was written, "To be destroyed after I am gone." Fortunately his wishes in the matter were disregarded. This composition, written about 1834, is a splendid pianistic example of delicacy and power in perfect balance.

SCHERZO IN B FLAT MINOR, OPUS 31 Frederic Chopin

This is the second of Chopin's four Scherzi. Schumann remarked upon the impassioned character of this splendid work, and wrote of it as "overflowing with such tenderness, strength, love, and contempt that it might be compared to a Byron poem."

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Mazurka Waltz

ONDINE Maurice Ravel

IV.

Ondine, the Water Sprite, is the first of a suite of highly imaginative piano pieces entitled Gaspard de la nuit, composed in 1908. Ondine, inspired by the poem of Aloysius Bertrand, falls in love with a mortal, and begs him to come to her palace and be the king of the lakes. When he replies that he loves a mortal, she weeps, screams, faints, and is gone in a stream of rain.

MARCH FUNEBRE Filip Lazar

Lazar was born in Roumania in 1894 and died in Paris in 1936. His compositions are pervaded by the spirit of both his native and his adopted countries, and reflect the period of transition through which he lived.

LA MAJA Y EL RUISENER Enrique Granados

ALLEGRO DE CONCIERTO Enrique Granados

One of the best known pieces from the suite, Goyescas, "The Lover and the Nightingale" is the sorrowful, passionate song of a Maja (for the "Lover" of the title is a woman), who is answered by the roulades and trills of the Nightingale song.

Allegro de Concierto is another superb example of Granados' skill in translating into the language of the piano the dazzling brilliance of Spain.

CORPUS CRISTI EN SEVILLA Isaac Albeniz

This work is one movement of the piano suite entitled, Iberia, which may be said to be one of the greatest contributions to modern piano literature. Imbued as it is with the very essence of Spain, and rich in harmony and sonorous effects, Iberia establishes Albeniz as a "landscape painter with a blazing palette" and unquestionably one of the immortals of Spanish music.

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